

Who Got Fooled, or the Mystery of 1910

A great many people are puzzled what to make of President Taft. He is not dishonest, for he emerged from a long career of office-holding a poor man. He is not lacking in intelligence, or he would not have been chosen for the many important places he has filled.

Yet at Winona he declared the new tariff law to be a "substantial revision downward," and "the best tariff bill the country ever had."

To prove this he used some figures prepared by the senate committee on finance, of which Senator Aldrich is chairman, showing that the tariff was reduced on necessary articles which this country uses to the extent of \$5,000,000,000 a year, and increased only on necessary articles which the country uses to the value of \$300,000,000 a year. As to the increases, there should have been none at all; and there were few because practically every greedy and powerful interest already was getting all the tariff duties it needed.

It sounds well to say that the tariff was reduced on commodities which the country uses to the value of \$5,000,000,000 a year, but it means absolutely nothing. Take an article which the country uses to the value of \$1,000,000,000 a year, and on which the tariff duty is prohibitive. Reduce that duty a trifle, though leaving it still prohibitive. The president could then say that the duty had been reduced on an article of which the country uses \$1,000,000,000 worth a year; but there would be no benefit whatever from the revision. And that is exactly what the president did. Either he was badly fooled by Aldrich, or he deliberately sought to fool the people.

Will Payne in the Saturday Evening Post analyzes that \$5,000,000,000 argument, and he doesn't leave much of it.

Duties were reduced on petroleum products, which this country uses to the value of \$260,000,000 a year. Yet this country is the great exporter of petroleum products, and free petroleum products would not lower prices.

Duties were reduced on marble, which is used to the extent of \$84,000,000 a year. Is marble a "necessary?"

Metals and manufactures of metal, which we use to the value of \$1,250,000,000, were reduced, but prices have gone up since the law went into effect. This is because the duties, combined with this country's supremacy in methods of manufacturing, are prohibitive still.

Lumber was slightly reduced, and that item amounts to \$500,000,000. If the maximum rates apply to Canada, the duty will be enormously increased instead of being reduced. The price of lumber has not been reduced by the reduced tariff.

Refined sugar represents \$300,000,000, and the duty on that was reduced so little that if the benefit of the reduction got to the consumer, he would have to eat an even ton of sugar to save a dollar; yet the price of sugar has advanced since the law went into effect. The sugar duties are still prohibitive.

Half a billion is represented by food and agricultural products, mostly bacon, hams, pork and beef, of which we export vast quantities and import little or nothing. These commodities have also gone up in price. The reason: The duties are still too high and the products are controlled by a trust.

Print paper represents \$67,000,000. There was a very slight reduction on this duty, which still is practically prohibitive, and if the maximum duties apply, as they almost certainly will, the duty will be multiplied several times instead of being reduced.

Soft coal, another large item, amounts to \$900,000,000, and the slight reduction in the tariff will have no effect on the price except in such localities as can be reached by vessels from Nova Scotia. The price of soft coal has not gone down since the tariff went into effect.

These items amount to \$4,000,000,000 out of the president's total of \$5,000,000,000, and from none of them will the consumer get the slightest benefit. Other items too small to amount to much in detail consume the rest of the five billions.

Either the president was ridiculously fooled by Aldrich, or he sought to befool the people.—Duluth Herald.

WHO ARE HIS ADVISERS?

President Taft, according to Washington dispatches, has just discovered the existence of another "plot" to discredit his administration. His assumption that a "conspiracy" exists is based

on the theory that the repeated attacks on Ballinger and the latter's conduct of the general land office are in reality but canards invented to injure the present administration.

This, then, is the third "conspiracy" that has been hatched against the president since he assumed office.

The discovery of the first "plot" occurred about the time the president prevented the unseating of Speaker Cannon and the improvement of the house rules. Some of the party leaders, particularly Aldrich and Cannon, apparently expected that the president was to be "roasted" for rescuing Cannon and the old rules from defeat. So a story was started to the effect that information from authentic sources showed "the big muck-raking magazines to be in a conspiracy to discredit the Taft administration." However, most of the magazines named in the "conspiracy" did not publish a single article relative to the Taft-Aldrich-Cannon triumvirate, and those magazines which did handle the subject very generously left the president out of the discussion altogether.

Now as to the second "plot:" It was discovered and laid bare by a big New York newspaper just after President Taft had declared at Winona that the Payne-Aldrich-Smoot tariff bill was the best legislation of the kind ever enacted. The ring leaders of the "plot" were declared to be Senator LaFollette of Wisconsin, ex-Secretary of the Interior James R. Garfield, and others. The object of the "plot" was to "discredit the Taft administration!"

Had the president co-operated with the insurgents when they were endeavoring to dethrone Cannon "plot" No. 1 would never have been hatched.

Had the president stated in his Winona speech that the new tariff law was the most infamous ever created, and that it would be likely to have the effect of further advancing the cost of living, there would have been no necessity for the second "conspiracy."

And if the president was now supporting Pinchot instead of Ballinger there would be no necessity for the latest "plot," nor even an investigation of the general land office.

Who ate Mr. Taft's advisers and counsellors that permit him to be eternally taking a position on public questions that is offensive to nine-tenths of the people of the United States.—Waterloo (Iowa) Times-Tribune.

"Four Years More of the Full Dinner Pail"

Do you remember the republican party's slogan "four years more of the full dinner pail?" What has become of that slogan now? The New York World in its issue of Tuesday, January 4, printed this news item:

The old man died first, but the young man seemed to be the weaker and the hungrier as the two friends in adversity tottered to the door of the Municipal Lodging House, at Twenty-fifth street and the East river, last night. So it was that the starving man of sixty supported his starving companion of twenty-eight as they dragged their dreary way along the water front to the city's bread line, supported him and urged him to hold out for another block or two, to keep up his spirits for a few more minutes until he could get to the free food and thus strengthen himself for the next day's hunt for work.

The starving man of only twenty-eight groaned and staggered on with the help of the feeble arm about his waist.

The starving man of sixty said cheerily, "There's the lodging house light now, only the next block. We'll smell the coffee in a minute."

Hundred Hungry Men Made Way

There were a hundred men in the line ahead of them when they reached the goal. Those hundred were merely hungry, suffering from hunger, but they did not have to hold each other up till their turns came. So these derelicts recognized that there were grades of suffering even on the bread line. They stood aside to let the old man and the young man pass in ahead of them. They risked their own precious places by stepping out of line to let those who were starving get to the bread.

"Don't you smell the coffee now?" murmured Sixty to Twenty-eight; but the younger man was senseless. It was only the support of his friend of the streets that kept him from falling before

the pyramid of bread and the steaming urn of coffee.

"He's starving; I know him, but I don't know his name. Feed him, quick," quavered the old man.

Superintendent Newhouse and the attendants took the younger man and placed him on a bench.

Relieved of his burden, the old man stretched out his hand toward the bread. He touched it and fell dead.

The hungry hundred knew that he was dead; no need for the red tape of the coroner to tell them that. The red tape merely required that he should be covered with a sheet and left where he fell; between them and society's dole of the bread and coffee.

Poor Fellows Honored the Dead

The evening rites went on with one little difference. As each one reached out across the man who was no longer hungry for the allowance of bread with one hand he raised the other to remove a battered hat in honor of the dead brother.

The younger man was revived for a few minutes. He said that he did not know who his friend was. "We were together on the street. He helped me get here. I don't know his name." Then the younger man became unconscious again and was taken to Bellevue. The doctors say he, too, will die of starvation.

Neither man had been drinking. Neither man had an overcoat or underclothes—just outside rags to conform to the law if they did not fit the temperature. Neither man had so much as a scrap of paper that would suggest his identity. But the police must have statistics and here is the best they could do for a record of the incident on the blotter of the East Twenty-second street precinct:

Man, about sixty years old, unknown, five feet eight; died at Municipal Lodging House; starvation.

Man, about twenty-eight years old, unknown five feet seven and a half, removed in a dying condition from Municipal Lodging House to Bellevue; starvation.

"COALITION" INDEED!

Walter Wellman, Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald, says that a "coalition" has been formed between the Taft administration and the regulars in congress for the purpose of whipping into line the republican insurgents.

If Mr. Wellman does not know that the Taft administration and the Aldrich and Cannon forces, which he calls the "regulars" are one and require no "coalition," he could learn something to his advantage by communicating with the average Illinois farmer.

"SATISFACTORY"

Associated Press dispatches say that the administration bill relating to the interstate commerce law "will in the main be satisfactory to the railroads;" also "that the railroad interests will object to the measure up to the last ditch committee members say is to be expected." Are we to understand that this objection is merely to make it appear that the measure has not been framed so that it "will in the main be satisfactory to the railroads?"

AT THE DOOR

I thought myself indeed secure,
So fast the door, so firm the lock;
But, lo! he toddling comes to lure
My parent ear with timorous knock.

My heart were stone could it withstand
The sweetness of my baby's plea,
That timorous, baby knocking, and,
"Please let me in, it's only me."

I threw aside the unfinished book,
Regardless of its tempting charms;
And, opening wide the door, I took
My laughing darling in my arms.

Who knows but in eternity
I, like the truant child, shall wait—
The glories of a life to be,
Beyond the Heavenly Father's gate?

And will that Heavenly Father heed
The truant's supplicating cry,
As at the outer door I plead,
" 'Tis I, O Father! only I?"

—Eugene Field.